

EDITORIAL

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THE INFLUENCE OF THE LITERATURE OF PHARMACY ON PHARMACY AND ITS VOTARIES.

IN a paper on the Literature of Pharmacy, presented to the Section on Historical Pharmacy and printed in this issue of the JOURNAL, Frederick B. Kilmer gives some interesting information and data, and from these he makes deductions that apply to the progress of pharmacy. Not infrequently there is complaint that pharmacy is not receiving better interpretation in literature. There may be a reason in that a comparatively small percentage of pharmacists look into the history of pharmacy, read its literature and study the viewpoints of authors who have depicted the druggist, if not the pharmacist, in their writings. We may not agree with their views, which in some instances are misrepresentation, still their presentations are part of literature, and we find them in George Eliot, Kingsley, Thackeray, Dickens, Scott, Ben Johnson, Shakespeare, etc., as well as in "Tono Bungay" and "Veneerings." Artists endeavor to depict events and scenes of life according to their viewpoints, and authors, whose aim is to leave a truthful record, employ the lights before them, but shadows often interfere with their vision.

The literature of pharmacy and relating to pharmacy would require long years to classify or review. The Library of the Surgeon General at Washington has about 9000 volumes; more than a third of them are concerned with pharmacy, to some extent; the Lloyd Library has about 52,000 volumes and half of them are in some way related to pharmacy; the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION Index, up to 1902, has about 55,000 titles and 70,000 references.

Writers will take privileges in their productions that fit into their story, in which facts are sometimes distorted in order to hold the readers' interest.

The foregoing does not apply to historical records wherein the pharmacist should be fairly appraised for his service. This represents a thought realized by the American Historical Association which, under the chairmanship of Hon. Albert J. Beveridge, is encouraging research work that will correct erroneous statements regarding momentous events because of prejudice or guess, and also fill up gaps in historical accounts.

Each local association should be a press agency for pharmacy, acquainting the public with important facts and events concerning it, supplementing, in a way, the Drug Trade Bureau of Public Information, and presenting the pharmacist's viewpoint with assurance that he is jealous of his personal reputation, and he understands that security and stability of his profession and business depend in a large measure upon public confidence in all business. Also, in desiring the truth to be known of pharmacy and the drug business, pharmacists are working for the general good of all professions and business and for those served.—E. G. E.